

Appl. No. 10/644,667
Amdt. dated October 5, 2005
Reply to Office Action of July 15, 2005

PATENT

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A network interface device for processing a telephone call, the network interface device comprising:
 - a first communication interface coupled to at least one of a wireless phone network, a public switched telephone network (PSTN), a satellite phone network, and a voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) network, wherein the first communication interface receives the telephone call from any of a plurality of callers remote to the network interface device;
 - a second communication interface coupled to one or more phones at a user location, wherein:
 - the one or more phones are associated with a telephone number, and
 - the plurality of callers can call the one or more phones with the telephone number;
 - a telephone switch coupled to both of the first communication interface and second communication interface, wherein the telephone switch optionally routes an incoming phone call to the second communication interface if one or more access control rules permit routing the incoming phone call to the second communication interface; and
 - a controller that analyzes the one or more access control rules **and which comprise either routes 1) routing** the incoming phone call from the first communication interface to the second communication interface, **2) routing the incoming phone call to a voice response system,** or **prevents 3) preventing** the incoming phone call from reaching the second communication interface, wherein the one or more phones ring when the incoming call is routed to the second communication interface,
- wherein the controller routes the incoming phone call to a voice response system which queries a caller of the incoming phone call to record a greeting, and on a**

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subsequent phone call from the caller routed to the second communication interface, a ring tone for the subsequent call comprises the greeting.

2. - 3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim [[3]] 1, wherein the greeting is played instead of a ring tone.

5. (Original) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the network interface device is located at the user location.

6. (Original) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the network interface device is physically accessible from outside the user location.

7. (Original) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the one or more access control rules are stored within the network interface device.

8. (Original) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the second communication interface is one of a PSTN interface and a VOIP interface.

9. (Original) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 8, wherein the VOIP interface is one of a wireless Internet interface, a WIFI™ interface, a power line Internet interface, an ultra-wide band wireless interface, a cable modem interface, an ethernet interface, and a DSL Internet interface.

10. (Original) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the first communication interface uses a first physical transport that is different from a second physical transport of the second communication interface.

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11. (Original) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the one or more phones are chosen from the group consisting of a POTS phone, a cordless phone, a WIFT™ SIP phone, and a wired SIP phone.

12. (Original) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the network interface device is integral with at least one of the one or more phones.

13. (Original) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the controller routes the incoming phone call to voicemail according to the one or more access control rules.

14. (Currently Amended) A method for processing a telephone call, the method comprising steps of:

receiving a phone call from a first communication interface coupled to at least ~~one~~ two of a wireless phone network, a wired phone network, a satellite phone network, and a voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) network, wherein the first communication interface receives the telephone call from any of a plurality of callers remote to the network interface device;

providing a second communication interface coupled to one or more phones at a user location, wherein:

the one or more phones are associated with a telephone number, and
the plurality of callers can call the one or more phones with the telephone

number;

analyzing the one or more access control rules; and

performing one of a following steps depending on the analyzing step:

routing the incoming phone call from the first communication interface to
the second communication interface, and

preventing the incoming phone call from reaching the second communication interface, wherein the one or more phones ring when the incoming call is routed to the second communication interface.

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15. (Original) The method for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 14, wherein the one or more access control rules test a caller ID variable associated with the incoming call.

16. (Original) The method for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 14, wherein the one or more access control rules block all incoming calls during a time period.

17. (Original) The method for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 14, wherein the one or more access control rules route all incoming calls during a time period to a voice response system.

18. (Original) The method for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 14, wherein the one or more access control rules block one or more incoming calls during a time period.

19. (Original) The method for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 14, wherein a specified number overrides the one or more access control rules to route the incoming phone call to the second communication interface.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for processing a telephone call, the method comprising steps of:

modifying one or more access control rules based on input from a user received via a user interface accessible by way of the Internet;

receiving a phone call from a first communication interface coupled to at least one of a wireless phone network, a wired phone network, a satellite phone network, and a voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) network, wherein the communication interface receives the telephone call from any of a plurality of callers remote to the network interface device;

providing a second communication interface coupled to one or more phones at a user location, wherein:

the one or more phones are associated with a telephone number, and

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the plurality of callers can call the one or more phones with the telephone number;

analyzing the one or more access control rules; and

performing one of a following steps depending on the analyzing step:

routing the incoming phone call from the first communication interface to the second communication interface,

preventing the incoming phone call from reaching the second communication interface, wherein the one or more phones ring when the incoming call is routed to the second communication interface, and

routing the incoming phone call to a voice response system.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Original) The method for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 20, wherein the user location is a residence and the method is performed within the user location, but not on the one or more phones.

23. (New) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the one or more access control rules may be modified via a user interface accessible by way of the Internet.

24. (New) The network interface device for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 1, wherein the first communication interface is coupled to at least two of a wireless phone network, a public switched telephone network (PSTN), a satellite phone network, and a voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) network.

25. (New) The method for processing the telephone call as recited in claim 14, wherein the second communication interface comprises both a PSTN interface and an IP network interface, and at least one phone coupled to the PSTN interface and at least one phone coupled to the IP network interface simultaneously participate in the incoming phone call.